

CHAPTER 2

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

A. GENERAL

1. This Chapter and Appendices A through I establish mandatory and desired experience, education, and training standards for each acquisition career field by career level for the DoD Acquisition Career Development Program. Those standards have been approved by the USD(A&T) for acquisition workforce personnel, both civilian and military, consistent with DoD Directive 5000.52 and 10 U.S.C. 1722(a) and 1723(a) (references (h) and (d)). Those mandatory standards constitute the certification standards for acquisition positions. Additionally, this Manual addresses statutory requirements for certain acquisition positions.

2. Experience and education standards for civilian positions are in the current edition of the U.S. OPM Qualifications Standards for General Schedule Positions (reference (n)). Also, 10 U.S.C. 1701-1764 (reference (d)), impose additional experience, education, training, rotation, and length of assignment requirements for acquisition positions. Those statutory requirements must be met unless waived under the provisions of 10 U.S.C. 1724, 1732, 1734 or 1737 (reference (d)), and Appendix M. For recruitment to acquisition positions, additional mandatory experience, education, and training standards imposed by this Manual shall be used as quality ranking factors. When applying the ranking factors, certification under current or former standards is evidence of having met the standards, at the level of the position being filled.

3. Included with the career path standards are position category descriptions which are defined by acquisition-related duties rather than specific job title or occupational series. Besides listing the acquisition duties, each position category description provides occupational series codes that frequently include acquisition duties and other indicators.

B. CAREER LEVELS

1. Each position category and each career field is divided into three career levels for purposes of establishing standards and qualifications: basic or entry (Level I: GS-05 through GS-09, officer O-1 through O-3); intermediate or journeyman (Level II: GS-09 through GS-12, officer O-3 through O-4); and advanced or senior (Level III: GS -13 and above, officer O-4 and above). Representative or typical grade levels associated with each career level are shown to assist acquisition workforce members and supervisors in career development planning. Grade levels shall vary

by position category and/or career field and may include enlisted grades (for example: purchasing). Listed grade levels shall be used as a guide.

a. **Basic or Entry Level (Level I)**

(1) Basic level training standards are designed to establish fundamental qualifications and expertise in the individual's acquisition career field. Development at the basic level lays the foundation for career progression and is designed to prepare qualified, motivated personnel for positions of increasing responsibility.

(2) At the basic level, individuals should be exposed to the functions of acquisition and the roles of its various specializations. Besides participating in education and training courses, it is extremely beneficial for individuals to develop additional and enhanced capabilities through structured on-the-job rotational assignments between a variety of functional offices.

b. **Intermediate or Journeyman Level (Level II)**

(1) At the intermediate level, specialization is initially emphasized. Development continues, including rotational assignments, but the responsibilities and length of time an individual spends in each position generally increase.

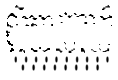
(2) While specialization is emphasized at the beginning of this level, the individual should later begin to broaden his or her background toward a more general expertise in the overall processes of his or her acquisition career field. Development of the generalist normally involves establishing a good foundation of experience in the employee's primary specialty followed by multi-functional experience accomplished by lateral movement to a related acquisition specialty.

c. **Advanced or Senior Level (Level III)**

At the senior level, advanced acquisition education and training become essential. Individuals at this level should seek acquisition related opportunities available through the DoD Components, or pursue other formal education opportunities.

d. **Senior Acquisition Course**

(1) 10 U.S.C Chapter 87 (reference (d)) directs the establishment of a senior service school course for members of the acquisition corps. A senior acquisition course has been established at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), National Defense University. While not mandatory for certification, this is the capstone course for all members of the acquisition corps, regardless of career field.



(2) Attendance at the course is limited to those selected by their Components. Students completing the 10-month executive development program are graduates of both the Senior Acquisition Course and ICAF, and receive an M.S. in National Resource Management.

2. The individual level standards form the basis for the next higher level of progression in a “building block” manner.

C. ACQUISITION POSITION CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

1. Each acquisition position shall have a certification standard established for it. The certification standard shall be one of the three career levels for that career field as it appears in Appendices A through I. Certification standards for Program Management Oversight; Education, Training and Career Development; and DLA Multifunction Management positions shall be from among the established acquisition career fields listed in Appendices A through 1. The mandatory experience, education, and training standards for the career level assigned to a position are the standards the incumbent of the position must meet, in accordance with the time frames described in subsections C.2. through C.3., below.

2. When an employee is assigned to a position and does not meet the applicable certification standards for education, training, and experience, the organization has 18 months in which to get the individual certified or obtain a waiver. The alternative methods for meeting those standards are identified in sections H., I., and J., below.

3. An acquisition position certification standard shall be assigned at the time an acquisition position is designated. For incumbents of newly designated acquisition positions who do not meet certification standards applicable to their position, the organization has 18 months to get the individual certified or obtain a waiver or equivalent credit. The procedures are identified in sections H., I., and J., below.

4. The Components shall ensure that information on certification standards is readily available to incumbents of acquisition positions.

D. CERTIFICATION

1. Certification is the process through which the DoD Components determine that an individual meets the mandatory standards (experience, education and training) established for a career level (i.e., I, II, or III) in an acquisition career field.

2. The DoD Components are responsible for certifying members of the acquisition workforce. The standards prescribed in Appendices A through I are mandatory

DoD-wide and are to be implemented directly without being supplemented by the DoD Components. Only the standards identified in this manual as MANDATORY may be used for certification.

3. Component certification programs shall include a requirement to meet the applicable mandatory experience, education and training standards established in this Manual.

4. Individuals may be certified in more than one acquisition career field. Component certifications are applicable DoD-wide and are reciprocal.

5. The USD(A&T) may specify new certification standards. An individual certified at a particular level remains certified at that level regardless of any new requirements made effective after certification. Individuals not currently certified at that level must meet the new certification standards.

6. Individuals should meet Level II, and Level 111 certification standards before being assigned to positions at that respective level. In cases where the potential assignee to Levels I, II, or III, does not meet the certification standards, the organization has 18 months to qualify the individual to meet the certification standards or obtain a waiver (see Appendix M).

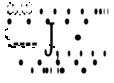
7. When individuals are assigned directly to the acquisition workforce in a Level II or a Level III position, it is not necessary to meet the standards established for lower level positions. As an example, a person who did not have prior DoD acquisition experience and is assigned to a Level 111 acquisition position, would not be required to meet the Level I or II mandatory standards to be certified at Level III.

8. An employee cannot have certification requirements waived, i.e., an individual cannot be certified through a waiver. The requirement that an employee be certified to hold a particular acquisition position may be waived by the applicable authority (see Appendix M).

E. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

1. Besides certification standards, certain acquisition positions have statutory requirements. See Appendix M for the statutory requirements for the following positions:

- a. CAPS.
- b. PEO, PM, or DPMs.
- c. GS-1102 series personnel.



- d. Warranted contracting officers (above small purchase).
- e. General, flag officers, or Senior Executive Service (SES).
- f. Senior contracting officials.

2. When indicated in Appendix M, acquisition corps members who do not meet those additional statutory requirements may be assigned up to 6 months without a waiver. Provisions for notifying the USD(A&T) when a waiver is required for general, flag officer or SES selection are contained in Appendix M, section H.

F. USING THE OUSD(A&T) DAU CATALOG (REFERENCE (O))

1. Reference (o) and this Manual must be used together to identify all courses that shall satisfy mandatory training standards. This Manual is policy oriented, providing consistent application of standards to all acquisition career paths. Reference (o) lists all of the specific courses available to meet the training standards specified in this Manual and all of the assignment specific courses required to perform specific assignments. Reference (o) is published annually and can accommodate course modifications, changes, additions or deletions easier than the policy document. Reference (o) contains certification and assignment specific course descriptions, recommended prior experience and/or education and equivalent DAU courses and equivalency examination information.

2. If there is any apparent discrepancy between this Manual and reference (o), the information in this Manual takes precedence.

3. Annually, the USD(A&T) shall publish current education, experience, and training certification standards in the form of checklists which the DAU shall reprint in reference (o).

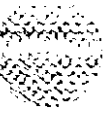
G. TRAINING MANAGEMENT

1. Assigning Personnel to Training

a. Component Heads are responsible for assigning military members and civilian employees to attend DAU courses. The SAES and the DACM for Components outside the Military Departments shall prioritize attendance of acquisition workforce members at DAU courses to meet mission needs, to ensure that persons are qualified to perform the duties to which they are assigned, and to provide career-development opportunities to the acquisition workforce.

b. The DAU is responsible for providing training required by the USD(A&T), component heads, SAES and DACMs for acquisition workforce personnel. In providing this training, it shall be the goal of DAU to meet the mission needs and

provide career development opportunities for acquisition workforce personnel in consonance with the priorities established under paragraph G. 1., above, and those of the USD(A&T).



c. Component Heads may authorize attendance at DAU courses by military members and civilian employees, under the auspices of the Acquisition Career “ “ Development Program, for any of the following purposes:

(1) Qualifying incumbents (including selectees) of acquisition positions for which the course is mandatory by statute.

(2) Qualifying incumbents (including selectees) of acquisition positions for which the course has been designated as mandatory under the authority of this Manual. Included are courses identified as mandatory for career certification required for the positions and assignment specific courses identified as mandatory for performing the duties of particular positions.

(3) Providing training identified as “desired” in this Manual and for attendance at the senior acquisition course.

(4) Qualifying workforce members for the next higher level in their primary career field.

(5) Qualifying workforce members cross functionally for assignments in other categories for which management determines a need exists and for assignments such as to an integrated product development team.

(6) Providing acquisition training to non-members of the acquisition workforce such as members of the IG, DoD’s organizations when such training has been identified by the USD(A&T) as meeting a valid acquisition-related need.

(7) Providing job related acquisition training to non-members of the acquisition workforce when training requirements have been identified by the CAE as meeting a valid acquisition related need.

(8) Providing acquisition training to non-members of the acquisition workforce for the purpose of accession into the acquisition workforce.

2. Course Approval and Recommendations “ ,

a. Every DAU certification and assignment specific course shall have a proponent and be recommended for approval to the USD(A&T) by a DoD functional board or comparable organization.

b. All certification and assignment specific courses are prescribed annually by the USD(A&T) and published in reference (o).

H. ALTERNATE TRAINING METHODS

Instead of attending the mandatory courses or their predecessors, individuals may meet the training requirements by one of the following methods:

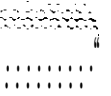
1. The employee may complete a certified equivalent course. Approved equivalents are listed in the OUSD(A&T) DAU Catalog. (reference (o)).
2. The employee may pass the applicable DAU equivalency exam, if available.
3. Personnel with appropriate alternative experience, education, and/or training may satisfy mandatory education or training standards by using the procedures established in ADS-95 -03-GD (reference (i)).
4. Completion of certain academic courses offered by civilian institutions of higher education that are approved by the USD(A&T), or designee, and reference (o) to be equivalent to the DoD mandatory training courses.
5. Completion of accredited academic degree or certificate programs offered by civilian institutions of higher education that are approved by the USD(A&T), or designee, and set forth in reference (o) as equivalent to those mandatory courses offered by certified Government schools.

I. ALTERNATE EDUCATION METHODS

1. Statutory education requirements for acquisition corps membership are described in DoD Instruction 5000.58. (reference (g)). The option to substitute equivalent training for the 12 semester credit hours in the business disciplines was provided by 10 U.S.C. 1732(b)(2)(B) (reference (d)). The DAU Directory (ADS-93 -01-DIR, Volume 1 reference (p)) describes the standard for 12 semester credit hours in the disciplines specified by the statute which maybe met by successful completion of comparable training courses carrying an American Council on Education (ACE) credit recommendation.

2. Employees who are required to possess 24 semester credit hours in the business disciplines to qualify for the acquisition corps; or for contracting positions; or had less than 10 years acquisition experience as of October 1, 1991, maybe able to meet all or part of the credit hour requirement through successful completion of examinations administered by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). Eligibility requirements and application procedures are described in the DAU Pamphlet: "Prepare for Advancement Through Testing,"

(reference (q)). DANTES administered examinations are provided without cost to acquisition workforce members.



3. Unlike the option described in subsection I. 1., above, ACE credit recommendations may NOT be used to meet the 24 semester credit hour requirement for contracting personnel, or the 24 semester credit hour requirement for acquisition corps membership. In accordance with 10 U.S.C. 1724 and 1732 (reference (d)), credit hours “from an accredited institution of higher education” in the specified disciplines and only such credit hours shall be counted toward meeting the 24 semester credit hour standards. The test is whether the credit hours are in one of the disciplines and appear on an official transcript (or comparable document such as a grade report) from such an institution as having been granted by that institution. The basis on which the institution granted academic credit shall not be considered, as that is a matter properly under the purview of the accrediting bodies and the institutions, and reference (d), requires the Department of Defense to recognize credit once granted.

4. Any time semester credit hours are required for certification, DANTES or CLEP examinations maybe substituted.

J. ALTERNATE EXPERIENCE METHODS

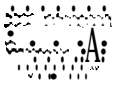
Up to 12 months of training or education in acquisition maybe counted toward fulfilling the experience standards established by this Manual for a particular acquisition career field or position or acquisition corps qualification (Section 1723(b) of reference (d)).

K. CAREER PATHS

Typical career paths for military and civilian personnel for each of the acquisition career fields are shown in Appendices A through I. They are identified by the experience, education, training, and work assignments necessary for career progression to the most senior acquisition positions. Grades used here are typical and should not imply a direct correlation with timing for completing the experience, education, and training standards. The paths are necessarily generic and shall be used as a guide for planning career development programs (Section 1722 of reference (d)).

L. WAIVERS

1. Procedural guidance for all waivers authorized by statute and implementation of DoD issuances is in Appendix M.



2. Tenure waivers are not required for individuals who are reassigned when a program is canceled or merged with another program, or when an organizational realignment abolishes an individual's position. Additionally, a tenure waiver is not required when a Service Selective Early Retirement Board identifies an individual for early retirement.

3. Assignment period waivers executed coincident with filling a position constitute both a waiver of the requirement to execute a tenure agreement and a waiver at the end of an assignment period in the following cases: a. an individual is assigned to a short and/or hardship tour location; or, b. when an individual formally announces in writing his or her intent to retire before completing of a full tour.

M. ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

Every member of the acquisition workforce has the responsibility to conduct himself or herself in accordance with the highest standards of ethical behavior so that every citizen can have complete trust in the integrity of the acquisition system. Each course in the Defense Acquisition Education and Training Program shall include instruction on ethics in the acquisition profession. That instruction may be tailored to the type of course and student level. Instruction shall include DoD Ethical Values and method of ethical decision making contained in DoD Directive 5500.7, (reference (r)). Additionally, students' responsibilities to act as ethical leaders in the workplace shall be emphasized.

N. ASSIGNMENT SPECIFIC COURSES

Assignment Specific courses are listed in the OUSD(A&T) DAU catalog (reference (o)). See section F., above, and definition 36 "Mandatory DoD Acquisition Course."